

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2007EDU0050-000358
March 30, 2007

Ministry of Education

EDUCATION MINISTER HONOURS AWARD-WINNING PRINCIPAL

CHILLIWACK – Chilliwack Central elementary principal Clyde Dougans joined Education Minister Shirley Bond in the legislature this week for an Education Week ceremony in recognition of his Canada's Outstanding Principal Award.

"The Chilliwack school district and the Province are very fortunate to be able to draw on the leadership and knowledge Clyde has," said Bond. "His passion for education has reached far beyond the borders of the school to the benefit of the students and community as a whole."

Dougans began his teaching career more than 33 years ago after his interest in teaching was fostered through volunteer work during his time as a student at Point Grey secondary school. Dougans believes that a partnership with parents and community is critical to a shared vision of student success, so in 1997 he invited 26 representatives from local organizations to participate in a formalized school steering committee at Central elementary.

A process of community involvement continued and led to establishing a society and receiving a community school designation, opening the door to daily programming and no-cost summer activities for the inner-city population. Since then, the community school programs have grown and are now captured under one umbrella known as The Gateway Project. Dougans will be retiring from the teaching profession in December to work on his hobby farm and continue his work with charitable organizations in the community.

"I admire the commitment that Mr. Dougans has shown to his students and his community," said John Les, MLA Chilliwack-Sumas. "I offer him my congratulations on his achievements and wish him well in his upcoming retirement."

"I congratulate Mr. Dougans on his exceptional contribution to our school system," said Barry Penner, MLA Chilliwack-Kent. "The importance of working together cannot be overstated when it comes to the education of our children, and Mr. Dougans has played an important role in fostering this cooperation."

"Clyde was instrumental in providing the vision for the Gateway program. He recognized a need for the integration of community and school and then led as the plan became a reality," said Chilliwack school board chair Doug McKay. "Despite this, Clyde will not take the credit. He is the first to remind us that Gateway belongs to everyone and is a result of the staff and community leaders working together to make the program the success it is."

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Dougans is among 32 national recipients of the Canada's Outstanding Principals award, an initiative of The Learning Partnership, a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to championing a strong public education system in Canada. Canada's Outstanding Principals program honours the extraordinary contributions of dynamic education leaders in publicly funded schools.

Principals who have made a measurable difference in the lives of their students and their own local communities and who help ensure that Canada's young people continue to receive a quality education have been selected from across the country for the prestigious honour.

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